

WIRRAL COUNCIL

PENSIONS COMMITTEE

16 JULY 2018

SUBJECT:	COMMUNICATIONS POLICY 2018
WARD/S AFFECTED:	NONE
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF PENSIONS
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 In accordance with regulations the Fund is required to publish a statement of policy concerning how it communicates with members and scheme employers.
- 1.2 The Communications Policy was last changed in January 2012; the attached revised policy takes into consideration the Fund's move to more electronic communications and the increasing use of technology by members and employers.
- 1.3 The Pension Board considered the draft policy at its meeting on 13 June 2018 and deemed it suitable for presentation to Pensions Committee.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Fund has moved to electronically distributing Annual Benefit Statements for active and deferred members. Paper copies are provided to members only if they provide a written request to the Fund.
- 2.2 The production and circulation of newsletters to active and deferred members has now changed to being produced in response to changes in regulations; where their format is particularly useful when explaining multiple, complicated concepts with diagrams and examples.
- 2.3 Other more cost-effective means of communication can be used to update deferred members as part of the annual statement production.

- 2.4 For active members, the Fund has been successful in providing employers with material for use on organisation intranets, staff briefings and email broadcasts. There also remains the opportunity to communicate annually as part of the annual benefit statement production.
- 2.5 The Fund continues to work with its IT system supplier to develop the functionality of the MyPension online system for members.
- 2.6 By increasing functionality within the online system, further budget savings will be realised as more communications and interactions can take place securely online with members.
- 2.7 The update to the Communications Policy has also removed items and references that are now more appropriately documented in other policy documents; namely, the recently updated Pensions Administration Strategy, the Administration Records & Data Improvement Policy and the draft Data Protection Policy.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 There are none arising from this report.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not relevant for this report.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Fund has communicated to members the change to electronically distributing Annual Benefit Statements via newsletter, letters to home address and also multiple communications in collaboration with scheme employers.
- 5.2 The Pension Board considered a draft of the attached Communications Policy at its meeting of 13 June 2018, prior to its presentation at Pensions Committee.

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

- 6.1 None associated with the subject matter.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 There are none arising from this report.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

8.1 In the past two years, the Fund has made budget savings in reducing the amount of paper being produced in the administration of the Fund.

8.2 By maximising electronic communications and developing the MyPension self-service in collaboration with the system supplier, further savings will be realised in the long term; reducing the cost of administration to employers.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none arising from this report

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No equality impact assessment is required

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are none arising from this report

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are none arising from this report

13.0 RECOMMENDATION

13.1 That Committee approve the revised Communications Policy.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 The Fund has made changes to its means of communication to members which need to be reflected in the updated policy.

REPORT AUTHOR

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE - Merseyside Pension Fund Communications Policy 2018

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date